ന്ന ദീനക്കാക്ക് Doctorമാർ Prescription എഴുതികൊടുത്തു അതുപ്രകാരം മരുന്ന മേടിച്ചു സേവിക്കാൻ ഉപദേശിച്ചയയ്ക്കും. മരുന്ന വിലക്കുമേടിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കാത്ത ചില സാധുക്കൾ Doctor മാരോടു ആവലാതി പറഞ്ഞാൽ അവക്ക് എന്തെങ്കിലും Coloured water കൊടുത്തയയ്ക്കുകയാണു പതിവു. അതുകൊണ്ടു രോഗികൾക്കു വേണ്ടത്തക്ക മരുന്നുകൾ അയപ്പിച്ചു കൊടുക്കാൻ ഗവർമ്മെൻറിനോടു അറിയിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

നെന്മാറ ഫർക്കായിലെ കൃഷിയെപ്പററി അല്പം പറയാതെ കഴികയില്ല. ഈ കൊല്ലത്തിൽ അസാധാരണമായ മഴകൊണ്ടു ഓരൊ കണ്ടങ്ങളിൽ രണ്ടു മൂന്നു പ്രാവശ്യം വിത്തു വിതയ്ക്കേണ്ടിവരികയും കൃഷിക്കു വെള്ളം ക്രമേണ്ടതായ സമയത്തു മഴയില്ലാതെ കൃഷികൾ പിളർത്തും കതിരുകൾ വളരെ ആക്കം ചുരുങ്ങിപോകയും ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്നു. ഈ കഴിഞ്ഞ കുംഭമാസം മുതൽക്കു ഒന്നനമായ മഴ തുടങ്ങിയതിനാൽ മഴയടികൊണ്ടു കതിരുകൾ മുണ്ടായി പോവുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. പലവിധത്തിലും നെന്മാറയിലെ കൃഷിക്കാക്ക് വളരെ നഷ്ടകഷ്ടങ്ങൾ സംഭവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള സംഗതി നെന്മാറയ്ക്കു സർക്കീട്ടു വന്നിട്ടുള്ള മാ. രാ. രാ. ദിവാൻപേഷ്കാർ മുതലായ സകല ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർക്കും അറിയാവുന്ന ഒരു സംഗതി ആണു്.

എന്റെ ഈ അപേക്ഷ ശരിയൊ അല്ലയൊ എന്നു ഗവർമ്മെൻറിൽ നിന്നു ശരിയായ ഒരാളെക്കൊണ്ടു അന്വേഷണം നടത്തി ശരിയാണെന്നതോന്നുന്നപക്ഷം നൂറിനു 50 °/° നികുതിയിൽ കുറവുചെയ്തു തരുവാൻ നെന്മാറ ഫർക്കായിലെ കൃഷിക്കാരുടെ പ്രതിനിധിയുടെ നിലയിൽ ഞാൻ വളരെ വളരെ അപേക്ഷിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

ഇനി ഒരു വാക്കുകൂടി എനിക്കു പറയുവാനുള്ളതു നെന്മാറ Constituency യെ പററി ആണു്. നെന്മാറ Constituency-ൽ അടുത്ത election നു് Voters എണ്ണം അധികമാക്കുവാൻ ഇടയുള്ളതുകൊണ്ടു ടി Constituency ൽ നിന്നു ഏറെ നാഴിക അകലെയുള്ള പട്ടഞ്ചേരി മുതലായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളെ കൂട്ടിചേർത്തിരിക്കുന്നതു M. L. C. election നു് നില്ക്കുന്ന മെമ്പറന്മാർക്കു votes canvass ചെയ്യാൻ വളരെ കഷ്ടവും നഷ്ടവും നേരിടുന്നതിനാൽ ടി പട്ടഞ്ചേരി മുതലായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളെ നെന്മാറ Constituency ൽ നിന്നു ഒഴിവാക്കിതരണമെന്നു നെന്മാറ ഫർക്കായിലെ ജനങ്ങളുടെ അഭിപ്രായത്തെ ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട ഗവർമ്മെൻറിനെ അറിവിക്കണമെന്നു എന്നെ ഏല്പിച്ചതനുസരിച്ചാണു് ഞാൻ ഈ സംഗതി അറിയിച്ചതു്. മേലെഴുതിയ സംഗതികൾക്കു ദൃഷ്ടാന്തമായി നെന്മാറ ഫർക്കായിലെ ജനങ്ങൾ Franchise Committee പ്രസിഡൻറവർകൾക്കു ഹരജി ബോധിപ്പിച്ചിട്ടുമുണ്ടു്.

ADJOURNMENT MOTION

re. the Fire Accident in Ernakulam.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan (*Chalakkudi*).—Sir, the object of the motion is to request the Government to make an immediate

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

public enquiry into the disastrous fire that broke out last week at Broadway, Ernakulam. All civilized Governments in the world, whenever such a disaster takes place, make a public enquiry as to how it occured, what remedial measures were taken, etc. So far as Cochin is concerned the fire that broke out may be considered to be a great disaster. Properties worth about two lakhs of rupees have been destroyed. I may inform the House that a few individuals have been reduced to penury as a result of this havoc. We do not authoritatively know how it occurred and why it could not have been prevented earlier. Some people say it was so sudden and nothing could be done. Whatever it may be, a great calamity took place. We must have authoritative information. For that purpose an enquiry should be made to find out what was the trouble and what measures should be taken to avoid such disasters in future, but not to censure anybody. So far as I know the Municipality and the Police have done their duties. If only a public enquiry is made we can find out the real facts. I request that Government should appoint a High Tribunal to make a public enquiry about this incident.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri).*—Sir, I would like to know whether the adjournment motion tabled by me is to be taken up now. My adjournment motion deals with things different in its scope—from the scope of the adjournment motion of my Hon'ble friend Mr. Moothedan. Mr. Moothedan's motion proposes to discuss the necessity for the appointment of a committee to go into the whole matter while my motion is *to point out the inadequacy of the machinery and arrangements maintained by the Municipality and the Government also for that matter and to censure them for their negligence.*

Mr. President.—What does the Hon'ble Member suggest?

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Pallippuram).*—By appointing a committee all these things can be gone into, who is responsible for this trouble, etc.

Mr. K. T. Mathew *(Kunnamkulam).*—He does not agree to the appointment of a Committee.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri).*—I wish, Sir, to move my motion as an independent one.

Mr. President.—In the same subject matter only one adjournment motion can be moved. The moment Mr. Moothedan's motion is admitted, Mr. Ezhuthassan's motion becomes out of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

order though worded in a different language. But during the discussion of the motion any Hon'ble Member is at liberty to introduce any other points in connection with that.

Mr. K. T. Mathew *(Kunnamkulam).*—If there are two adjournment motions we do not know how we can speak on them. I may not agree with Mr. Moothedan but I may agree with Mr. Ezhuthassan on the other hand.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. എസ്സ്. പണിക്കർ *(Ezhuvas North).*— ഈ അഡ്ജോൺമെൻറ് മോഷൻ കൊണ്ടുവന്ന ഒരാൾ പറയുന്ന ഗവമ്മേൻറിനേയും മുൻസിപ്പാലിറ്റിയേയും മറും censure ചെയ്യേണമെന്ന്. മേ റൊരാൾ പറയുന്ന ഒരു കമ്മറ്റി നിയമിക്കണമെന്ന്. എന്നാൽ ഈ അഡ്ജോൺമെൻറ് മോഷൻറെ ഉദ്ദേശം ഞാൻ വിചാരിച്ചതു, തീകത്തിയതെങ്ങിനെയാണ്?, തന്നതാനൊ; വല്ലപേരും മനഃപൂർവ്വം ചെയ്തതാണൊ?, കഷ്ടനഷ്ടങ്ങൾ സംഭവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളവക്ക് വല്ല സഹായവും ഗവമ്മേൻറ് ചെയ്യേണ്ടതുണ്ടോ? ഇങ്ങിനെയുള്ള ആപൽഘട്ടത്തിൽ പട്ടണത്തെ രക്ഷിപ്പാൻ ഒരു നല്ല ഫയർ ഇഞ്ചിൻ മേടിക്കാൻ ഇനിയെങ്കിലും ഗവമ്മേൻറ് വിചാരിക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ? ഇതൊക്കെ ആലോചിക്കാനായിരിക്കുമെന്നാണ്. അതുകൊണ്ട് ഈ അഡ്ജോൺമെൻറ് മോഷൻ ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ അതിൻറെ രൂപത്തിൽ എടുക്കാതിരിക്കുന്നതു ആയിരിക്കും നല്ലതു എന്നാണു എൻറെ വിശ്വാസം. കമ്മിറ്റി രൂപീകരിക്കുന്നതായാൽ ഈ വക സംഗതികളെ പറ്റി നല്ലവണ്ണം പഠിച്ചാലോചന ചെയ്തു ഗവർമ്മേണ്ടിനെക്കൊണ്ടു വേണ്ടതു പ്രവൃത്തിപ്പിക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കുമെന്നാണു എൻറെ പ്രതീക്ഷ.

* മിസ്റ്റർ ടി. എ. രാമചന്ദ്രയ്യർ *(Nellayi).*— ഭയങ്കരമായ അഗ്നിബാധ എറണാകുളം ടൌണിൻറെ നടുക്കു. അതായതു, പോലീസസ്റ്റേഷൻറെ അടുത്തു, ദിവാൻജിയുടെ ബഗ്ലാവിൻറെ അടുത്തു, അങ്ങാടിയുടെ നടുക്കു, കായലിൻറെ സമീപം, വഷ്കാലത്തിൽ ഒരഗ്നിബാധയുണ്ടായി വളരെ കഷ്ടനഷ്ടങ്ങൾ സംഭവിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. അതേപ്പറ്റി പ്രത്യേകമൊരനുഷ്ഠാനം നടത്തണമെന്നു പറയുന്നതിൽ ആശ്ചര്യപ്പെടുവാനില്ലെന്നാണെൻറെ അഭിപ്രായം. ഇതിനുള്ള കാരണമെന്താണെന്നു അനേഷിക്കുന്നതുകൊള്ളാം.

ഇവിടെ ഇർവിൻപാക്കു മുതലായ പലേ ഏർപ്പാടുകൾ വിനോദത്തിനായി ഉണ്ടാക്കീട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും കായലിൽനിന്നു വെള്ളമെടുക്കാനുള്ള സൌകര്യങ്ങൾ യാതൊന്നും ഇല്ല. അവിടെനിന്നു ഫയർ ഇഞ്ചനും മറും പെട്ടെന്നു വെള്ളമെടുക്കാനുള്ള സൌകര്യമില്ല. ഇവിടത്തെ ഫയർ ഇഞ്ചൻ അഗ്നിബാധ പെട്ടെന്നു കെടുത്തത്തക്ക യന്ത്രത്തോടുകൂടിയതല്ല. അതിനാൽ ആ കാര്യങ്ങളെ പറയാനും ഗവമ്മേൻറും മുൻസിപ്പാലിറ്റിയും എന്തെങ്കിലും നിവാരണമാർഗ്ഗങ്ങൾ ചെയ്യുകയുണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടോ

* Speech not corrected by the Hon'ble Member.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

എന്നും മറും അനേപ്രഷിക്കാനാണ ഒരു കമ്മറി വേണമെന്ന പറയുന്നത്. ഈമാതിരി കഷ്ടനഷ്ടങ്ങൾ മേലാലെ കിലും വരാതിരിക്കാൻ ആണ് ഒരു കമ്മറി വേണമെന്ന ഞാൻ പറയുന്നത്. അതിനാണ് ഈ അഡ് ജോൺമോഷൻ കൊണ്ടുവന്നത്.

Mr. Shabdai S. Koder *(Jews Special)*.—Sir, I wish to add a few words in this connection. This disastrous fire must have impressed upon the Government the necessity of having a fire brigade in our State. If that is not feasible I would request the Government to compel all the Municipalities in the State to have an up-to-date fire engine. I was informed that the fire engine that was used to extinguish the fire had to be taken half a dozen times to a distant place to be filled with water when water was so close at hand. It is absolutely necessary to have up-to-date fire engines in our Municipalities. I therefore request the Government once again to compel Municipalities to maintain up-to-date fire engines.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri)*.— Mr. President, I must confess at the outset that I find myself in a most awkward position. Personally I am not of the view that any useful purpose is going to be served by the constitution of a committee to go into the question of the fire that gutted down as many as 8 shops in the broadway. What I want to impress upon the House is that if the Municipality, or for the matter of that, if the Government had taken the necessary precautionary measures to fight the fire effectively as and when it breaks out the calamity that has befallen Ernakulam could well have been averted. Averted it has not been. Therefore, my point is that both the Municipality and the Government to a very great extent stand condemned as far as their neglect, individual or contributory, is concerned. That was the point, Sir, that I wanted to impress upon this Hon'ble House through my motion which on the ruling of the Chair has now become not possible. On the other hand the Chair has invited the opinion of individual Hon'ble Members on this subject from any angle of vision. It is because of this suggestion from the Hon'ble the President, that I propose to intervene in this debate now though I feel a great handicap in that I will not have the right of reply.

The information that I have, Sir, of this incident is from two paper reports as also some information that I was able to gather locally after going over to this place. As far as the paper report goes I think I will be justified in taking the paper reports as true. One of the reports, is contained in a daily of the locality, a paper that has established a partiality for truth, as

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

far as matters of Government are concerned. I refer to the report contained in the local daily 'Deepam'. The other report is from an equally known paper not of this place but of the other premier town of the State, viz., Trichur. That also has established a partiality for truth, again as far as Government matters are concerned. I am referring to the report that is published in the 'Gomathi' of Trichur. Two responsible dailies published from the two important towns of the State do contain pieces of information which, according to my reading of them, go to show that the Government had been neglectful and the result is what we witness in the broadway today, a most heart rending sight indeed.

Dr. A. R. Menon (*Pallippuram*).—On a point of information, Sir, were they neglectful in fighting out the fire or neglectful in taking precautionary measures?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan (*Wadakkancheri*).—The latter more than the former, though the former count also stands.

The facts as disclosed from these paper reports are:— The fire breaks out at about 1 a. m., flames started from a shop dealing in spirituous liquors first, fire gains strength, flames on the house tops, tall cocoanut trees and their leaves withering as a result of the flames, as a result of the intensity of the flames. The police station is phoned. Inspector Mr. Poulose rushes to the spot. All glory to him. The police fire engine out of order or useless. Tins and small vessels utilised for purpose of taking water to fight this huge fire. I must say that that position though natural to the occasion is indeed a shameful one. Tiles begin to throw themselves out with force. Therefore, the approach to the spot becomes dangerous to life. Some injuries are actually sustained. It is at this juncture—mark the loss of time—that the Municipal water lorry—mark it is a water lorry —reaches the scene and in what fashion? My information is to this effect: The driver who alone could handle that useless machine—I say useless because it is so—lives at Perumanoor. The key of the shed where this useless machine—I again say useless—is kept is with the Health Officer of the Municipality living at the northern extremity of the town beyond the Power House there. My information is—if it is correct—that this useless machine shows a partiality for Alwaye drinking water at a distance to fight fire while plentiful supply of water given by bountiful nature was available yonder at the back water close to the scene of the fire. It taps the reservoir first to a

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

depth of 8½ feet. I am told that it was the beautification scheme of the foreshore that stood in the way of water being pumped from the backwaters for no consideration is seen to have been made for such eventualities. I confess part of my information is gathered from local enquiry. I don't know whether they are interested or distorted. Therefore, I again submit, it is subject to correction that I make these observations. If, therefore, the facts are correct the position of the Government or that of the Municipality is something which I do not wish to characterise. It is, Mr. President, to put it mildly, next to criminal. The point, as I submitted before, emerging from these things is the censure, unalloyed censure, of the Government and of the Municipality. I must in this connection submit, Sir, that with the available resources at their hands—barring, of course, the fact that the key of the shed in which this useless machine was kept was in a far off place, the driver was at the farthest end—both contributing to great delay—the partiality for the Alwaye water and the difficulty of taking water from the backwaters—the authorities concerned had done their duty to the very best of their abilities. All glory to the officers of the police and to some officers of the Government and the Municipality who are reported to have taken an active part in fighting the fire with their limited means. I understand that Police Inspector Mr. Poulose, with a posse of constables rushed to the spot and did yoemen service. The Municipal Sanitary Inspector, Councillor Mr. V. K. Kutty and many others are reported to have done excellent work. But what could they do? I am told, again, that the Local Magistrate, the District Magistrate who was camping here, the Hon'ble Secretary to the Government who lives here, the Joint Secretary to the Government, all had been on the spot. They did their best by giving directions and by trying their level best to fight out the fire. But to what avail? My point, sir, is this. The Municipality, one of the premier Municipalities of the State, is it not shameful to be told that it has got only a water lorry, which is used mainly for the purpose of watering the dirty roads of Ernakulam, for putting out the fire? Is it such a good fire engine which can be requisitioned for the purpose of fighting this big wrath of God. Is it sufficient for that purpose, I ask? Cannot the Municipality go in for something better? Should it not have kept something much better. Then, what about the Police fire engine? If it is out of order what is the use of keeping it. Is the Government of Cochin so poor as not to be able to buy a fire engine of the first degree to fight fire as and when itbreaks out in such crowded bazaars like the broadway at Ernakulam containing in it large stores of various articles,

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

costing I may say, lakhs and lakhs of rupees. That is the question that I propose to put to the Government of Cochin and to the Municipality of Ernakulam. Let alone their beautification schemes. The answer is only one, that they have been neglectful and criminally at it. That is my poor reading of the situation. Now, I had occasion to refer to the presence of responsible officers both of the Government and of the Municipality. I also mentioned the yoemen service that they did to the extent of their capacity. But I ask was there sufficient initiative on their side to requisition if it was within their means the services of the Cochin Tug which is there in the Habour area and which, I am told, has got the capacity of fighting fire at a distance of half a mile. If that is a fact it ought to have been requistioned.

Mr. President.—Unfortunately that Tug cannot be taken to shallow waters.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancherri).*—In that case, Sir, I have to withdraw that portion of my remarks and I do withdraw the same and still stick to the failure on the part of the Municipality to get a first class fire engine and the failure on the part of the Government to keep a first class fire engine with the Police and the failure on the part of the authorities of the Municipality in making sufficient and proper arrangement to have the engine brought to the spot in time to check the fire. In matters like this, and if my information is correct, when the fire breaks out from a spirituous liquor shop, it is timely action done immediately and at the earliest possible moment that counts. It is that alone that counts. You will have to bring the biggest machinery and all available machinery that you have got poor though it be within the shortest time. The negligence on the part of the Municipality to make it available at the earliest possible opportunity is the charge. This is the charge that I lay at the doors of the Municipality and.....

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Pallippuram).*—Is this charge mainly against not having taken precautionary measures or the Municipality's neglect or the Government's neglect when once the fire broke out?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancherri).*—For the information of the Hon'ble Member for Pallippuram, for both. For not keeping sufficient and proper machinery and for not taking timely action as adverted to by me, key in one end, driver at the other end, partiality of the engine for Alwaye water. For these I charge the Municipality. I charge the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Government for not forcing the Municipality to keep good machinery for fighting. I charge them for not keeping a well equipped machinery themselves. I hope the Hon'ble Member for Ernakulam who is the Chairman of the Municipality will dispell any mis-information that I have placed before the Government taking my stand upon the paper reports and also the Government's spokesmen will tell us what it is that prevented them from keeping a first class fire engine with the Police authorities and why they did not compel the Municipality to have a good fire-engine. Mr. President, I shall close my remarks with one more observation. All glory, all praise to all those persons who took part in fighting fire and preventing futher havoc. There are 8 shop keepers, I am told, one of whom alone, has insured and insured recently. A lot of talk is being heard about that insured shop and its ways. I don't refer to it as it is not relevant. With regard to the other seven I suggest that whatever possible help the Government can render them with their limited finances they may be pleased to render to these unfortunates. My suggestion is that if any one of the seven shopkeepers concerned in this loss, not due to their fault, is in a position to place with the authorities at least some sort of security the benign Government may be pleased to advance loans so that they may put up business there and try to eke out a livelihood.

Mr. C. R. Iyyunni *(Trichur South).*—Who is that shopkeeper who has insured his shop?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri).*—I am told that it is the one dealing in spirituous liquors.

* **Mr. M. Sivarama Menon** *(Ernakulam South).*—I am indeed very much obliged to the movers of this adjournment motion which has given me an opportunity to impress upon this House the service that is being done by the enthusiastic workers who were responsible for putting out this fire. It was last year that the Municipality wanted to purchase a water lorry and because the price of petrol was going high we went in for a decent lorry which I claim is one of the best type of engines which can be obtained in this world. Now when that lorry was requisitioned it was also brought to my notice that if a pump is also fitted on to the lorry it will be easier to draw water and therefore we placed an order with a reputed firm for a pump, which costs Rs. 900. It can pump water to a height of 60 feet. Such a pump was fitted to the lorry and it was tested in my

* Speech not corrected by the Hon'ble Member.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

presence as well as in the presence of the Mechanical assistant to the Chief Engineer. It was doing yeoman service for watering roads in the Municipality. A few months later I received an enquiry from the Government whether we cannot keep this lorry in readiness as a fire fighting apparatus. I replied to say that if I have to keep it ready as a perfect fire fighting machine I should have to make additional fittings also and that I can unhesitatingly accept that responsibility from the 1st of Chingom 1113. The order of the Government approving my request is dated a few days prior to this incident. From these facts I do not for a moment say that even though I was prepared to accept legal responsibility for maintaining this fire engine in readiness as an engine for carrying out a sacred duty, I was keeping it in readiness from the moment the information was communicated to me.

As to the fire accident in the Broadway, I may inform the Hon'ble Members of this House that the information of the accident was made known to me by no other person than the co-owners of the building and that at 2-30 a. m. I immediately came out of my house in my night clothes and immediately in that very same car I sent them along with another gentleman to the lorry driver who was living only two furlongs away. It was said that the key of the lorry shed was with the Health Officer. I may inform the House that the key of the shed is always with the driver. The owner of the building took the driver in his car and brought him to the Municipal office and within 25 minutes the lorry was in the Broadway with a load of water. It will be interesting to know what the owner of that building has written to me, not in any official capacity, to me on this matter:

"With reference to the disastrous fire which occurred to our Doraiswamy Iyer's Buildings on the night of the 27th July, 1937, I wish to say that as soon as my brother Venkateswaran got the information that fire had occurred, he immediately rushed to you, woke you up from your sleep, and you were kind enough to take very prompt steps to bring the fire under control and to see that the fire did not extend to other buildings. If you had not taken such prompt steps, and if the men under your control with the cooperation of others, had not discharged their duties loyally and faithfully, probably, the whole of the bazaar would have been destroyed by fire. Kindly allow me to thank you and the staff under you.

On my behalf, and on behalf of my brothers who are greatly affected by this accident, I forward, herewith, a cheque for rupees one hundred, with the request that you will kindly give such rewards as you deem fit to those deserving men under you who did yeoman service on that night. I have also mentioned the good work done by the Municipal authorities and others to the Diwan yesterday.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

I may inform you, in this connection, that one of the fire engines which was brought for the occasion was not functioning properly. If we had two good Fire Engines, the fire could have been extinguished much earlier and the heavy loss incurred by all could have been prevented. I hope the Municipal Council will take necessary action to maintain an efficient Fire Brigade and sufficient number of Fire Engines and fire hydrants to meet any emergency, as Ernakulam is developing into a very important city".

This is the opinion of a person who has suffered and who had his building gutted. You claim to be the citizens of a country whose percentage of literacy is the highest. If in such a country you blindly believe hearsay information and come forward with such an accusation in such an august assembly like this, I do know when political life will end in this State. I may tell you that not even one minute was lost in sending the owner of the building with another gentleman in his car to the driver's house. I myself stepped out of my house to call in the poor neighbours in order to direct them to the place of accident. It was the month of Karkidagom and the time was past 2-30 and everybody both the rich and the poor were fast asleep. I knocked at the doors of the huts of poor coolies living near-by. Then I immediately went to Valanjambalam expecting to awake the several rikshavalas who sleep on the road side. I found four of them and sent them to the place of accident. I knocked at several doors and thousands were sent to the bazaar. The lorry made several tours to take water and to go back and I may again say that not a moment was lost in doing a very necessary thing. It was said that the lorry could not work properly. It is absolutely false. I may assure the Hon'ble Members that the pump fitted to our lorry is the best in the world. I would invite the Hon'ble Members of this House to come to the Municipal Office and I shall show you whether that pump pumps water to a height of 60 feet. You know that most of the buildings in the bazaar have only a height below 60 feet and the tallest is V. K. R. Ayyar's buildings. I ask who pumped water to that building. Did not the Secretary to Government, the Joint Secretary to Government, the District Magistrate and the Magistrate see the Municipal lorry doing its splendid work there. I may tell you that its work was satisfactory. It was satisfactory at the time of the incident and its work is satisfactory even now. Of course the Police fire engine was useless because it is of a primitive type. There is no use of blaming them. I may say that if this Municipal lorry had not been available the whole bazaar of Ernakulam would have been burned to ashes. Before I took my own persons

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

— there were more than 50 persons on the lorry during its first trip — the bazaar people too had called in many to help them to quench the fire. If in spite of these efforts, the Municipality is to be blamed I can only say that there is no truth behind it. If the accusation is only based upon the imagination of Hon'ble members I have to say nothing. If it is otherwise I can only attribute it to some motive which I cannot contemplate or allude to now. To accuse us that the lorry was not working properly is something which is unjust. It is also something bad to the reputed manufacturers of the lorry and of the pump.

It was said that the lorry had a partiality towards Alwaye water. I think the Hon'ble Member has drawn that inspiration from the article which appeared in the Gomathi. My answer is this. You will find that the length of the lorry is 20 feet and it has a 500 gallon capacity. The only available road through which water can be taken from the backwater is the Alinkadavu road just behind the bazaar. If water is taken from there the lorry cannot reverse. There are gutters on either side of the road. In addition there are electric posts. So if salt water is to be taken it has to go further north. Rather than waste time like that, what was done was to go to the water reservoir and draw water from there. It takes only 4 minutes to fill it. The level of water fell to a depth of 8½ feet in the Reservoir. Before we began to draw water from the reservoir we informed the Chowwarah Head works by phone to go on pumping. The public, the Police and the Municipal servants worked in co-operation and it was due to their united efforts that the fire was brought under control by morning. We found that it will be easier to draw water from the reservoir than from the backwater. In the first place there was no proper road leading to the backwater. The lorry can draw water only from a distance of 30 feet. Further the water in the backwater is muddy. But if an ideal set of conditions prevailed, that is, if there were 3 or 4 electric pumps fitted by the side of the backwater, fire could have been extinguished easily. I cannot but concede that position. To say that the lorry did not come in time cannot be countenanced and to say that the lorry did not work properly is quite untrue. I would request the Hon'ble Member to go to the Municipal office and see whether I have exaggerated the matter. The charges levelled against the Municipality is baseless and I never thought that such a charge would be laid at the door of the Municipality by an Hon'ble Member of this House.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancherÿ).*—May I put in a word, Sir. I was telling from the beginning that my

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

information is based on the newspaper articles. So I cannot be blamed. I read it from the local dailies.

Mr. President.—When speaking on this matter the Hon'ble Member was very vehement. Now he cannot say that he simply quoted what the papers said.

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam South).*—During all these 10 years not one charge like the present one was laid against my door. The lorry was splendid and it was working properly. With all that if it is said that it was not working properly and that it did not arrive in time, I can only say that it is only due to something which I cannot say, something which I cannot gauge or something which I cannot imagine. So that it will be clear that even though there were no electric-pumps fitted by the side of the backwaters, to draw water from the reservoir was found to be easier.

Mr. Shabdai S. Koder *(Jews Special).*—Cannot long pipes be used to draw water from the backwater?

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam South).*—As I stated before there is a limit to which the pump will draw water. Only from a length of 30 feet it can draw, because its specification is 30 feet.

From all these facts it will be seen that there was absolutely no negligence. Every person has done his duty from the moment it was made known that fire has broken out in the Bazaar.

But, Sir, wherever there are fires fire engines are often blamed. Why could not the fire be prevented; why the authorities did not take preventive measures. Fire was made known to the authorities and the charge of neglect if there was any can be brought only if there was any neglect on our part from the moment it was made known to us. Not a minute was lost in sending information to the driver and the several other processes. If there was a fire brigade well and good, the police would have telephoned the brigade and the fire engine would have reached the place in no time. In this case there was no such arrangement and hence the driver had to be called, the lorry had to be taken to the reservoir and then only it could be taken to the place of incident. Here there were no such arrangements. Even in the case of the police the policeman had no cycle, the sub-Inspector had no car at his disposal. So nobody could reach the place all on a sudden. This was quite true.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

I have heard that some 45 years ago there was a similar fire in Ernakulam — I was not born then. This is the second experience. There was no municipality then to look after the interests of the ratepayers. Now that we have one, all precautionary measures will be adopted in the light of the present circumstances. All precautionary measures will certainly be made in consultation with the officers of Government. It is in the interests of the Municipality that our business shops are protected as far as possible. Can you for a moment imagine that the Municipality is going to neglect that sacred duty. The Hon'ble mover wants an enquiry to be made. I am sure the enquiry will show that these officers have done their duty to the best of their ability and I am sure they will shine in better colours. I am extremely glad that such motion was made. I am sorry that such a charge was laid against the Municipality when I myself was here. The Hon'ble Member for Wadakkancheri could have come to me for details and I would have explained to him everything and shown him in what order the lorry is. I myself read from an article in the Gomathi that the Municipal Councillors did not do anything for controlling the fire. I myself was going about giving directions. The correspondent finds fault with them and says that they have not drawn buckets of water and thrown them on the buildings. I do not know whether that Sannarsakan ever drew a bucket of water.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri).*—Why then was this not contradicted by the Publicity Officer now that we have one here?

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam South).*—There were present the Secretary to Government, the Joint Secretary to Government, the District Magistrate. Did they draw water and throw it on the buildings, I ask. All those persons assembled there, did they all help and draw water? The public and the police and the Municipal staff worked in co-operation and brought the fire under control.

You may know a son of Rao Sahib Mr. P. K. Verghese and the son of an Ex-District Judge Mr. Madhva Prabhu too cut off the timber when our lorry was throwing water. Several young men also helped us and contributed to the extinction of the fire and the controlling of it. So that when there were several persons working if a correspondent finds fault that the councillors were not there for throwing water, I can only say that they have only a poor conception of the matter. Do Commanders

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

go to the front of the fight? They are to give instructions. If I had remained there and sprinkled some water upon the building they would have made a good report of me.

On the same day there was a great fire in New Delhi causing a loss of about a lakh of rupees. Is not New Delhi a place where there are up-to-date fire engines and equipments? Is not Bombay a town provided with such up-to-date fire engines and equipments? Then how is it that we read in the papers that 4 lakhs or 5 lakhs of rupees worth of properties have been destroyed? In New Delhi the loss was about one lakh. Do not blame the fire. Milton has cautioned us in his 'Paradise Lost' and the fire that we have been dealing with in Ernakulam was a peculiar fire, because it was a firing fire. The fire emanated from the liquor-shop. That shop contained 600 bottles of methylated spirit. Over and above that there were two casks of methylated spirit, black and white whisky and hot kinds of whisky which will easily burn, and when they caught fire no fire engine on earth can put it down. Then Dr. Kunhalu's shop. I extend my fullest sympathy to this shop. This shop contained a good deal of castor oil and other oils which when mixed with this cinder only aggravated the fire. Then the most pitiable of it. There was a shop belonging to one Mr. George. That contained celluloid Japan toys worth about Rs. 2000 and odd. You can imagine the effect of celluloid upon fire. Then there was the paper mart. That fortunately did not burn owing to the work of the Police and the Municipal officers. So that the nature of the fire was such that it could have been controlled only within a reasonable time. When methylated spirit catches fire, as I told you before, when celluloid catches fire, do you mean to say that 100 fire engines can cope with it? Even if water is poured, we know what the effect will be. Without going to the spot and properly understanding what it is, to bring a motion of this nature—I don't use harsh words—I only say it is a very unkind act. With these few words, I beg to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Members of this House that we have done our duty, the Police have done their duty, the public have done their duty. It is not a case where a man is to be condemned without being heard. My Hon'ble friend, the Member for Wadakkancheri, wants to carry out the adjournment motion without hearing persons who are concerned with the fire. On the other hand, the Hon'ble Member for Chalakudi is very fair in asking for the appointment of a committee. But in spite of the action brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Member for Wadakkancheri, he had not the kindness or the courtsey towards the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

members of this House to see the result of the enquiry of the committee and then come forward with any challenging charges or accusations against the Government or the Municipality. I beg to submit that in this matter I have the greatest confidence that not only the Police officers, not only the Municipal officers, but the public also have done their best and all that was possible was done. There is absolutely no regret for any of the officers that he has failed in his duty. And we take it that Providence also was rather unkind that night, because even though there was heavy rain till after midnight there was not a drop of rain after that. If in spite of these hardships and sufferings this is the reward that any Hon'ble Member, though not established, wants to allege in this open House, I can only say that we are passing through such days when these accusations also must be heard.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri).*—Mr. President, can I make a personal explanation?

Mr. President.—Provided it is confined to a personal explanation.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri).*—Sir, the Hon'ble Member for Ernakulam, the very active chairman of this Municipality, was questioning the position that I took up. I prefaced all my remarks—they were characterised as very vehement by the Hon'ble President of this House—I prefaced all my remarks I submit that two dailies have published information regarding the events and their sequence concerning this fire. I thought that regarding an event of this magnitude which took place on the 13th of this month there will be a contradiction by the Government paid Publicity Officer if the reports in the two dailies were incorrect. That having not been published, I thought that I could take my stand on the reports because the offcier who is appointed for making contradictions of all talse statements has not done it. My information is confined fo those papers when I made this charge. To hear from the Hon'ble friend—my dear friend I must say because that is the sort of relationship between Mr. Sivarama Menon and myself—that I was making these statements maliciously is really painful to me. There was an undercurrent of something in his speech —the motive force that actuated me to speak as I did. I assure him that there was no such thing at all. I confined my remarks to the observations contained in these papers, and what follows if the reports are true. If I have given room to wound my Hon'ble friend's feelings inspite of the yeoman service

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

he has now told us he has done, but about which the papers were silent, I am very sorry. If I have given room for any sort of unhappy feeling in the mind of my Hon'ble friend, the Member for Ernakulam, and if what he stated is the truth and not the paper reports, I offer to him a most unconditional apology in this open House, because I know the seriousness of the charge that I have made. But it may be borne in mind not only by my Hon'ble friend but by the Government also that my remarks were confined to the reports in the paper uncontradicted by the Publicity Officer and therefore I have got a feeling in my mind that I have not offended.

Mr. President.—That this House would have to presume that every statement appearing in a paper which is not contradicted by the Publicity Officer is a true statement is a position which no Government can take. I must also remind Hon'ble Members that even though Hon'ble Members may make statements when they make charges culled from these articles, they are supposed to take personal responsibility for those statements themselves.

* **Dr. A. R. Menon** *(Pallippuram).*—The explanation of the Hon'ble Member for Ernakulam who is in a way mainly responsible on occasions of this nature and if he has made an explanation with a little feeling, I think it is entitled to weight. There must be some fairness in making an attack of this kind. Here is a question 'when Rome was burning Nero was fiddling'. When the bazaar was burning, the Chairman was sleeping soundly without taking necessary precaution. Unfortunately, even the Chairman of Ernakulam cannot anticipate the act of Providence. He has not got the Divine inside that would enable him to find out what might take place in 3 hours at midnight and he burns the midnight oil. He could not imagine that he should keep awake. Further, we have heard a lot about the fire fighting apparatus and things like that. One would think that of all the towns of South India we have got perfect arrangements to fight out the fire. Excepting a very few towns — I speak subject to correction—in South India, all towns have got no better arrangement than we have to fight out the fire. To fight out the fire in a proper way requires certain other conditions than simply having a first class lorry, a first class motor or first class fire engine. You must have water somewhere near by. If you want water near by, you can only get it by putting hydrants in the various parts of the town, so that you may have the use of these

* Speech not corrected by the Hon'ble Member.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

hydrants and pump out water. We have had similar accidents 3 or 4 times before. However much you may try, it would require 15 to 20 minutes to get one lorry full of water. By the time the fire would continue. That is the position. Certainly the condition of this Town and also Mattancheri is improving. It is absolutely necessary to lay out pipe lines and first class fire engines, because within another 20 years our Mattancheri will be a miniature Bombay. In a crowded place unless you have got all these—occasionally this act of Providence does take place —you would not be in a position to take adequate measures to put out the fire. No Chairman can anticipate such things. He has not got the Divine dispensation to say to the fire 'so far you shall proceed and not further'. The fire will go on and the Chairman will be standing there. And even if he takes a bucket of water that water will not have the sacred effect of putting down the fire. It is essential to appoint a committee not to enquire into the conduct of either the Chairman or the officers. I am amply satisfied that they have done their best and the testimonials about the satisfactory way in which the fire has been dealt with will bear this out. No one would have any more interest than the owner of the shop itself. I request the Government to appoint a committee to consider this question in its wider aspect and to take the necessary measures so that when this town grows into a city, a populous city, a very business city any such fire if takes place would be of infinitely more disastrous consequences. In all the towns occasionally fire breaks out and there would be some complaints about the lethargy on the part of the officers. But what are the charges here? I specifically ask the mover of this motion, the Hon'ble Member for Wadakkancheri who moved the censure motion.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Wadakkancheri).*—It is not my motion.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Pallippuram).*—There was a speech on that condemning the Municipal Chairman, and condemning every one. There were grave allegations. I ask a specific question to him, is your charge against the department for not taking precautionary measures? I can understand that. Is it that they have not done all that they should do? If the second charge is true, the chairman of the Ernakulam Municipality should be the first to come forward to this House and tender his unqualified apology. You cannot expect him to do wonderful things without finance. What are the charges enumerated? The person who has framed the charge says in a subsequent statement that the charge is unfounded. He gives a certificate

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

of good conduct, he gives a recommendation that all the officers of the Municipality and the police have done the very best they can to put out the fire. That shows that the charges were unfounded and in the course of the argument the charge was forgotten and something was said which nullified the charge. The charge was brought, that immediate measures were not taken, that the lorry was not brought in time, the lorry preferred Alwaye water to salt water. Then later on, it is said that everything possible that could be done by the Municipal subordinate officers, the Police and the public have been done. Where is the charge? The charge framed was nullified. Therefore there was neither the charge that there was neglect nor was there any charge of delay which could be sustained and it was admitted by the mover in his statement. I fail to see what precautionary measures could you take unless as I said you lay down water pipes, hydrants and fire engine kept ready both day and night with telephone communications and telephone figures on the public road with arrangements for signalling. That is what is called fire fighting unit. If you have got this thing, if you have got a fire engine which remains there all day and night and a number of signalling stations, immediately the fire has broken out, you can press the button and like magic it gives thundering help to put out the fire provided there is water. If you have done all these things, if fire breaks out and if it is not put out immediately it must be due to some neglect on the part of somebody. Without that simply having a lorry, a lorry which is not mainly intended for works of this kind and which is not fitted for this purpose, to say that this could have been done is untenable. It is not neglect on the part of any but it is our business to place these facts before the Government for their consideration so that we may avoid a recurrence of this sad event that took place. I therefore say that if the Government does not construe it as a motion of censure, there is no objection to appoint a committee not to enquire into the conduct of the officers concerned but to consider the necessary measures to cope with a more serious situation that might possibly arise in the near future. It would be better to appoint technical men in the committee including the Hon'ble Members here and then to devise measures so that we may not have the fear of such fire.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Urakam)*.—I wish to associate myself with every word of the Hon'ble Member for Pallippuram. But I do not think that a committee should be appointed so that there should not be the least suspicion or slur upon the actions of

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

the officers concerned. Now from what we heard from the chairman, it appears that the Government and the chairman were alive to the gravity of the situation even prior to the occurrence of this accident. It would be sufficient if they are asked to take the necessary steps to prevent the recurrence of it or minimise the dangers in future. I know the chairman of the Ernakulam Municipality for a very very long time and I would be the last man to suspect him of any inactivity in matters like this. But in spite of that when I heard of this adjournment motion I went round the bazaar yesterday myself and made personal enquiries into the matter and found to my great satisfaction that everything that has been possible has been done by the chairman and the police. Therefore, I think that it will be very very hard and uncharitable on the part of this House to say anything against the people who made such heroic efforts to prevent the spreading of fire on that day. I am only sorry that the Member for Wadakancheri with the experience that he possesses tabled this motion on the strength of a report in a paper particularily a paper which has always a monopoly for publishing such false news. Sir, it is a melancholy satisfaction—I say it is a melancholy one—that it is not the Hon'ble Member for Wadakancheri alone but persons holding higher positions and possessing higher responsibilities have many a time been misled by the reports in this paper. I therefore think that under these circumstances, it would be cruel and unjust if we press this motion to any division, even the motion of the Hon'ble Member for Chalakkudi for the appointment of a committee.

*മിസ്റ്റർ ടി. കെ. നായർ *(Pazhayannur)*.— ഞാൻ ആദ്യം തന്നെ ഈ കമ്മറി നിശ്ചയിക്കണമെന്നുള്ള പ്രമേയത്തിനെതിരാണ്. ഞാൻ എറണാകുളത്തു വന്ന അവസരത്തിൽ നേരിട്ട കണ്ടതും നാട്ടിൽവെച്ചു കേട്ടതും തമ്മിൽ വളരെ വ്യത്യാസമുണ്ട്. തന്മൂലം എന്റെ മനസ്സിനു വളരെ കൃതാർത്ഥതയുണ്ട്. എന്തെന്നാൽ ഞാൻ കേട്ടതു അങ്ങാടി മിക്കവാറും തീ പിടിച്ചു നശിച്ചുവെന്നാണ്. ഞാൻ അതുകേട്ട വളരെ വ്യസനിച്ചു. എന്നാൽ ഇവിടെ വന്ന കണ്ടപ്പോൾ എനിക്കു സന്തോഷമാണുണ്ടായതു്. കാരണം ഞാൻ ധരിച്ചിരുന്നതു ഭയങ്കര അപത്തു സംഭവിച്ചിട്ടില്ലെന്നു് അറിഞ്ഞതുകൊണ്ടുതന്നെ.

അർദ്ധരാത്രിയിൽ രണ്ടോ മൂന്നോ മണിക്കു തീപിടിച്ചു. അതിന്റെ ഉടമസ്ഥന്മാർ അവിടെ ഇല്ല. മറ്റു ഭാരവാഹികളോ ഇല്ല. അങ്ങിനെയുള്ള അവസരത്തിൽ അതിന്റെ ഭാരവാഹികൾ നാം തന്നെയാണെന്നു വിചാരിച്ചാൽ കുറെ സമാധാനത്തിനു വകയുണ്ട്. അർദ്ധരാത്രിയിൽ കിടന്നുറങ്ങുന്ന ഷാപ്പുടമസ്ഥന്മാരെയൊ പട്ടണത്തിലെ ചുമത

* Speech not corrected by the Hon'ble Member.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

ലക്കാരെയൊ തീപിടിച്ചുവെന്ന അറിയിച്ചാൽ സ്വബോധത്തോടുകൂടി ആലോചിച്ചു പ്രവൃത്തിക്കുന്നതിന് അവർക്കു തൽക്കാലം ഇല്ലാതെയാകും. പരിഭ്രമംകൊണ്ടു പെട്ടെന്നു എന്താണ് ചെയ്യേണ്ടതെന്നറിയാതെ അവർ വിഷമിക്കും. എന്നാൽ ഇവിടത്തെ ഭാരവാഹികൾ അര മണിക്കൂറിനുള്ളിൽ വേണ്ടതെല്ലാം പ്രവൃത്തിച്ചു ലോറി കൊണ്ടുവന്നുവെന്നറിയുന്നതിൽ സന്തോഷിക്കാതിരിക്കാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. ബ്രോഡ്‌വേയിൽ തീ കത്തുന്നു. എങ്ങിനെയാണു അവിടേയ്ക്കു ലോറി കൊണ്ടുചെല്ലുന്നതു്. എങ്ങിനെയാണു കായലിൽ നിന്നു വെള്ളം പമ്പുചെയ്യുന്നതു്. ഇതൊക്കെ ആലോചിക്കേണ്ട സംഗതികളാണു. ഗംഭീരമായി, ബാംബേ ടെയ്ണിൽ ഫർഫ്വ-ൽ ഞാൻ താമസിച്ചിരുന്നപ്പോൾ ഒരു മൂന്നുനില കെട്ടിടത്തിനു തീ പിടിക്കുന്നതുകണ്ടു. ഒരു മിനിട്ടിനുള്ളിൽ ഫയർ ഇഞ്ചിൻവന്നു. വെളിച്ചമാകുന്നതുവരെ, പമ്പു ചെയ്താൽ നൂറു അടി പൊക്കത്തിൽ വെള്ളം ചെല്ലുന്ന ആ മിഷ്യൻ, വക്കു ചെയ്തു. അവിടെ നവീനങ്ങളായ മറ്റു പല ഉപകരണങ്ങളും ഉണ്ടാക്കീട്ടുണ്ടു. വെളിച്ചമാകുന്നവരെ വെള്ളം പമ്പു ചെയ്തു; പക്ഷെ, ചുവരു മാത്രം കത്തിയില്ലെന്നു മാത്രമെ പറയാൻ നിവൃത്തിയുള്ളൂ. അതിലുണ്ടായിരുന്ന അനവധി സാമാനങ്ങളും നശിച്ചുപോയി. പൈപ്പു ഒന്നിച്ചു തുറന്നു വിട്ടിട്ടും തീ കെടുത്താൻ സാധിച്ചില്ല. നാം ഒന്നു മനസ്സിലാക്കണം, ശക്തിയായി കത്തുന്ന തീ എത്ര വെള്ളമൊഴിച്ചാലും പെട്ടെന്നു കെടുത്താൻ സാധിക്കുകയില്ല എന്നു്. ഇതുപോലെ പല തീ പിടുത്തവും ഞാൻ കണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ടു്. തൃശ്ശൂർ വെച്ചുതന്നെ കണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ടു്. തൃശ്ശൂർ ആദ്യം ഒരു ഇഞ്ചിൻ വന്നതു റോഡു നന്നാക്കുന്നതിനാണു്. പിന്നീടു ഡാക്ടർ എ. ആർ. മേനവൻ തൃശ്ശൂർ മുൻസിപ്പൽ ചെയർമാനായിരിക്കുമ്പോൾ ആണു് ഒരു ഫയറിഞ്ചിൻ വന്നതു്. ഞാൻ അതു ടെസ്റ്റ് ചെയ്തുനോക്കി. സ്വതേതന്നെ എനിക്കീ വിഷയത്തിൽ സ്വല്പം വാസനയുള്ളതുകൊണ്ടു ആണു ഞാൻ അതു പരീക്ഷിച്ചു നോക്കിയതു. ആ ഇഞ്ചിൻ പത്തുപതടി ദൂരം വരെ വെള്ളം പമ്പുചെയ്യുന്നതാണു്.

ഇവിടെ ഫയർ ഇഞ്ചിൻ ആലുവാ വെള്ളം ഉപയോഗിച്ചതിനെപ്പറ്റി പറഞ്ഞു. ൪൦൦ ഗ്യാലൻ വെള്ളം കായലിൽനിന്നു എടുക്കുന്നതിനു പത്തോ പതിനഞ്ചോ മിനിട്ടു വേണ്ടിവരുന്നു; ആലുവാവെള്ളമാണെങ്കിൽ ഒരു മിനിട്ടുകൊണ്ടു നിറയ്ക്കാൻ സാധിക്കും; അതുകൊണ്ടാണു കായൽ വെള്ളമെടുക്കാതെ ആലുവാവെള്ളം എടുത്തതെന്നു സമാധാനപ്പെടാം. ആലുവാവെള്ളം എടുത്തതുകൊണ്ടാണു് ഇത്ര വേഗം തീ കെടുത്താൻ സാധിച്ചതു. അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഈ അങ്ങാടി മുഴുവൻതന്നെ നശിച്ചുപോകുമെന്നാണു ആളുകൾ പറയുന്നതു്. എന്നാല്ല സാധാരണയായി ഈ വക കാര്യങ്ങളിൽ വീട്ടുടമസ്ഥന്മാർ ആണു കമ്പ്ലയൻറു കൊണ്ടുവരാറുള്ളതു്. റാവുബഹദൂർ ടി. ഡി. നാരായണയ്യർ അവർകൾ എഴുതീട്ടുള്ള റിപ്പോർട്ടിൽനിന്നു സ്ഥലം ഉടമസ്ഥന്മാർ എത്രമാത്രം തൃപ്തിപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു കാണാൻ കഴിയുന്നതാണു്. എന്നതന്നെയല്ലാ, അദ്ദേ

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

ഫ്ം ഫാ൦ ക. പ്രസന്റ ചെയ്യാനും നിശ്ചയിച്ചിട്ടണ്ടെന്നു കേൾക്കുന്നു. ഇങ്ങിനെ ഇരിക്കുമ്പോൾ കാരണം കണ്ടുപിടിക്കാൻ ഒരു കമ്മിറ്റിയെ നിയമിക്കണമെന്ന് പറയുന്നതു ശരിയല്ല. സാധാരണ തീ പിടിക്കുന്നതെങ്ങിനെയായിരിക്കുമെന്നു ആലോചിച്ചാൽ മനസ്സിലാകുന്നതാണ്. അല്ലാതെ തീ പിടിച്ചാൽ കെടുത്താനുള്ള വഴികണ്ടുപിടിക്കാനായി ഒരു കമ്മിറ്റിയെ നിയമിക്കണമെന്നു എനിക്കു തോന്നുന്നില്ല. ഞാൻ പറയുന്നു തീ പിടിച്ചാൽ വെള്ളം വേണമെന്ന്.

അതുകൊണ്ടു ഈ അവസരത്തിൽ തീച്ചയായിട്ടും ഒരു കമ്മറ്റിയെ നിയമിക്കേണ്ട ആവശ്യമില്ല. മേലാൽ തീ പിടിച്ചാൽ പെട്ടെന്നു കെടുത്താനുള്ള വഴി എന്താണെന്നു കണ്ടുപിടിച്ചു ചെയ്താൽ കൊള്ളാം. ഇപ്പോൾ അതിനായി അദ്ധ്വാനിച്ചവർക്കും കഷ്ടനഷ്ടങ്ങൾ വന്നിട്ടുള്ളവർക്കും എന്തെങ്കിലും സഹായം ചെയ്താൽ കൊള്ളാം. എന്റെ സ്നേഹിതൻ ഇതു പിൻവലിക്കണമെന്നു ഞാൻ അപേക്ഷിക്കുന്നു.

Mr. A. L. Devassy *(Police Commissioner).*—I only want to explain certain facts. It was stated by the Hon'ble Member for Wadakancheri that somebody phoned to the Police and then only they came to the spot. The Hon'ble Member also said that he read in the papers that the police were not found on the spot for some time. As a matter of fact the report I got is that on 12—12—12 at 2 a. m. in the course of their night round the Police saw that smoke was coming out of the liquor shop and they gave alarm before the people gathered. What the police did that night is not for me to praise. Enough has been said by the chairman of the Ernakulam Municipality. I need only read for the information of the Hon'ble Members of this House a letter which I also received from the owner of the building. He has sent me a Rs. 100 cheque and I am awaiting sanction of the Government for the distribution. The letter reads: "With reference to the disastrous fire of the 27th I wish to bring to your notice the loyal and faithful service rendered by the police to extinguish the fire. But for such action the whole of the bazaar would have been wiped out of existence. Kindly allow me to thank you and the staff under you. On my behalf and on behalf of my brothers I forward herewith a cheque for Rs. 100 for distribution to those whom you consider deserve such rewards as you deem fit, and also to such members of the public as have done good work" and so on.

As regards the motion for the appointment of a committee I would like to say one word. Very delicate enquiries are going on into the cause of the fire and I think it will be a disservice if a committee is appointed to enquire into the cause of the fire, at this stage.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. George Parakkal *(Narakkal)*.—I shall be failing in my duty if I do not say a few words, because I was present at the scene from 4 o' clock till about 9-30 a. m. It was a united effort on the side of the police, the Municipality and the public that were collected there to fight out the fire and to see that it does not extend further. But for the fire engine, I am sure the whole of the bazaar would have been under fire. It took nearly 15 to 20 minutes for that to load water. We were trying to quench the fire by pouring water in buckets and passing it from one end to the other. That had no effect. At last we had to throw mud and clay. But for the fire engine it would have been impossible to put out the fire. There was absolutely no negligence on the part of either the police, the Municipality or the public. The pump was working well and water was going 60, 70 or 80 feet.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി *(Muslims)*.— സർ, ഇന്നത്തെ അടിയന്തിര പ്രമേയത്തിനു കാരണമായ സംഭവം നടന്നിട്ടുള്ളതു ഞാൻ മുൻസിപ്പാലിറ്റിയിൽ പ്രതിനിധീകരിക്കുന്ന വാർഡിലാണെന്നുള്ളതുകൊണ്ടു എനിക്കു അതേക്കുറിച്ചു പ്രത്യേകം പറയാതിരിക്കാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. തീഭയം ഉണ്ടായി എന്നു കേട്ടഉടൻ ബസാറിലുള്ള കെട്ടിട ഉടമസ്ഥന്മാരുടെയും കച്ചവടക്കാരുടേയും ഇടയിൽ അതിയായ വ്യസനവും ക്ഷോഭവും വർദ്ധിക്കയും നാനാഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നും ആളുകൾ ഓടിക്കൂടുകയും ഉണ്ടായി. ഈ ഓടിക്കൂടിയവരെക്കൊണ്ടും വ്യസനത്താൽ അമ്പരന്നു നിന്നിരുന്ന വ്യാപാരികളെക്കൊണ്ടും തീ കെടുത്താനുള്ള ശ്രമത്തിൽ തൽക്കാലം കാര്യമായ യാതൊന്നും ചെയ്യാൻ സാധിച്ചില്ല. എന്തെന്നാൽ അവരുടെ സാധനങ്ങളും വ്യാപാര ശാലകളുമാണ് കത്തുപിടിച്ചും കൊണ്ടിരുന്നതു്. തദവസരത്തിൽ അവിടെ വന്നുചേർന്ന പോലീസ് ഇൻസ്പെക്ടർ അടക്കമുള്ള പോലീസുദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരും മുൻസിപ്പൽ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരുമാണ് അവിടെ ആവശ്യമുള്ള പ്രവൃത്തി പരിപാടിയിൽ ഉടൻ ഏർപ്പെട്ട കാര്യമായി പ്രവൃത്തിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നതു്. ഈ പട്ടണത്തിലുള്ള ഏതാനും ചെറുപ്പക്കാർ അവരെ മറന്നു, അവരുടെ കൂടംബത്തെ മറന്നു കത്തി വടക്കോട്ടു ഓടിക്കൊണ്ടിരുന്ന തീ കെടുത്തുവാനായി ആ കെട്ടിടത്തിന്റെ മേൽ യാതൊരു ഭയവും ക്രൂടാതെ കയറി അതു മുഴുവൻ പൊളിച്ചിട്ടു കെട്ടിടത്തിന്റെ മദ്ധ്യത്തിൽ വെച്ചു തീ അവസാനിപ്പിച്ചു. ഈ യുവാക്കളുടേയും മുൻസിപ്പാലിറ്റിക്കാരുടേയും പോലീസിന്റേയും അക്ഷീണമായ പരിശ്രമം ഇല്ലായിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ എറണാകുളം ടൌണിലുള്ള കെട്ടിടങ്ങളും വ്യാപാരങ്ങളും വെന്തു വെണ്ണീറായി നശിച്ചു പോകുമായിരുന്നുവെന്നു എനിക്കു ധൈര്യമായി പറയുവാൻ കഴിയും. ഇനി മറെറാരു തരത്തിൽ പറകയാണെങ്കിൽ അവിടെ തീപിടിച്ച കെട്ടിടം മിസ്റ്റർ നാരായണയ്യരുടെ കെട്ടിടമല്ല; മിസ്റ്റർ തൊരസ്വാമി അയ്യരുടെ കെട്ടിടം കത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നുവെന്നാണ് ജനങ്ങൾ

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

മനസ്സിലാക്കിയിരിക്കുന്നതു്. ഒരവസരത്തിൽ മിസ്റ്റർ ഡൊരസ്വാമി അയ്യർ എറണാകുളം മുൻസിപ്പൽ ചെയർമാനായിരുന്നു. സ്വതവേതന്നെ സാധുജനബന്ധുവും ദയാലുവുമായിരുന്ന അദ്ദേഹം അനവധി സഹായങ്ങൾ മുൻസിപ്പൽ ചെയർമേൻ എന്നുള്ള നിലയിലും സാധുക്കൾക്കു ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടു്. അദ്ദേഹത്തെക്കുറിച്ചു ജനങ്ങൾക്കു നല്ല ബോദ്ധ്യമുണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടു്. അങ്ങിനെയിരിക്കെ, ഒരു സധാരണക്കാരന്റെ കെട്ടിടത്തിനു പോലും തീ പിടിച്ചുവെന്നു കേട്ടാൽ ആളുകൾ ഓടിക്കൂടുമെന്നുള്ളപ്പോൾ ഒരു യഥാർത്ഥ ദയാലുവായ മി: ഡൊരസ്വാമി അയ്യരുടെ കെട്ടിടത്തിനു തീ പിടിച്ചുവെന്നു കേൾക്കുമ്പോൾ ആളുകൾ ഓടിക്കൂടാതിരിക്കുമോ? അതുപോലെതന്നെ ഈ കെട്ടിടം വാസ്തവത്തിൽ ഒരാളുടെ മനഃപൂർവ്വമായ ഉപേക്ഷകൊണ്ടോ, അനേഷണമില്ലായ്കകൊണ്ടോ ആണ് തീ പിടിച്ചതെന്നു വിചാരിക്കാൻ യാതൊരു ന്യായമില്ല. മുൻസിപ്പാലിറ്റിവക മോട്ടോർ ലോറി എത്തിയതിനു ശേഷം ഒരുപ്രാവശ്യം ഫോർഷോർ പുഴയിൽ നിന്നു വെള്ളമെടുക്കാൻ കഴിയുമോ എന്നു പരീക്ഷിച്ചു നോക്കി. വളരെ താമസം നേരിടുന്നുണ്ടെന്നു മനസ്സിലായി. ഉടൻ അടുത്തുണ്ടായിരുന്ന കോഡർ ഓയിൽ മില്ലിലെ ഒരു കിണറ്റിൽനിന്നു വെള്ളമെടുത്തു. ഇതിനിടയിൽ പല വിധത്തിലുള്ള ശ്രമങ്ങൾ ആളുകൾ ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നു. ഈ വിധത്തിലുള്ള ശ്രമം പോരെന്നു കരുതിയാണ് ലോറിപോയി ആലുവാവെള്ളം കൊണ്ടുവരാൻ തുടങ്ങിയതു്. ഈവിധമുള്ള ശ്രമങ്ങൾ പൊതുജനങ്ങൾക്കൊ മറ്റാർക്കെങ്കിലുമൊ ആക്ഷേപാർഹമായി തോന്നുന്നുണ്ടെന്നു വരികയാണെങ്കിൽ അതു നിശ്ചയമായും വലിയ പാപമാകും! പൊതുജനങ്ങൾക്കു വേണ്ടിചെയ്ത പ്രവൃത്തികൾ കണ്ടുമനസ്സിലാക്കാനുള്ള നന്മനസ്സും വിദ്യയും ഇല്ലെന്നുവന്നാൽ അവരെ മനുഷ്യരെന്നു പറയുവാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. എട്ടു പത്തു കൊല്ലമായി പട്ടണത്തിനു വേണ്ടി പരിശ്രമിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ചെയർമേനേയും കൌൺസിലിനേയും ഈ മാതിരി മനഃപൂർവ്വം ആക്ഷേപിക്കുന്നതു കേൾക്കുമ്പോൾ പലവിധ വിചാരങ്ങളുമുണ്ടാകുന്നു. പക്ഷെ ഇതിനൊക്കെ മറുപടി പറയാൻ ഞങ്ങൾക്കറിയാം. എന്നാൽ ഈ നിയമസഭ അതിനായുപയോഗിക്കണമെന്നു് വിചാരിക്കുന്നില്ല. എറണാകുളം പട്ടണവാസികൾക്കില്ലാത്ത ഒരറിവു ആണ പുറത്തുനിന്നും കേൾക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞതു്.

Mr. President.—As I have to meet the Commander-in-Chief I would like to say just a word on behalf of Government. It is clear from the general trend of the discussion that there is no intention on the part of this House to say that with the existing available apparatus any officer either of the Municipality or of the Government failed in his duty. (Hear, hear.) On the other hand, it is recognised on all sides that with the limited resources available everything that is possible has been done and the question that naturally arises after a calamity of this kind is whether the equipment that we have normally is sufficient to meet any such catastrophe in the future, and

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

certainly there would be no difference of opinion on that. Government are fully aware of the defect in our organisation. At the same time we have to realise that we cannot on financial grounds afford to keep that most up to date fire engine that advanced towns have kept. Nevertheless it is the duty of the Government and the Municipality to devise some means which within the limited finances of this State would enable them to possess an apparatus which will be more efficiently equipped than what we have now. I can assure Hon'ble Members that Government will not lose any time in making the best of enquiries and set up some apparatus which will meet the situation in a better manner. So far as this necessity is concerned, Government will straightway look into this matter not only in the Ernakulam Municipality but in other Municipalities as well so that similar calamities might not occur. I may assure Hon'ble Members that it will be done without any delay.

Mr. A. V. Moothedan *(Chalakkudi).*—I wish to say one word. I never wanted to censure anybody. My object was only to make an enquiry as is generally done in every civilised country so that in future such calamities should be prevented. That object has been achieved and I am glad that an opportunity has been given to the Municipal chairman to vindicate his position. I request that I may be allowed to withdraw the motion.

Motion was withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The House rose for the day at 5-10 p. m.

B. V. KRISHNANKUTTY MENON,
Secretary to the Council.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly